

# indykids!

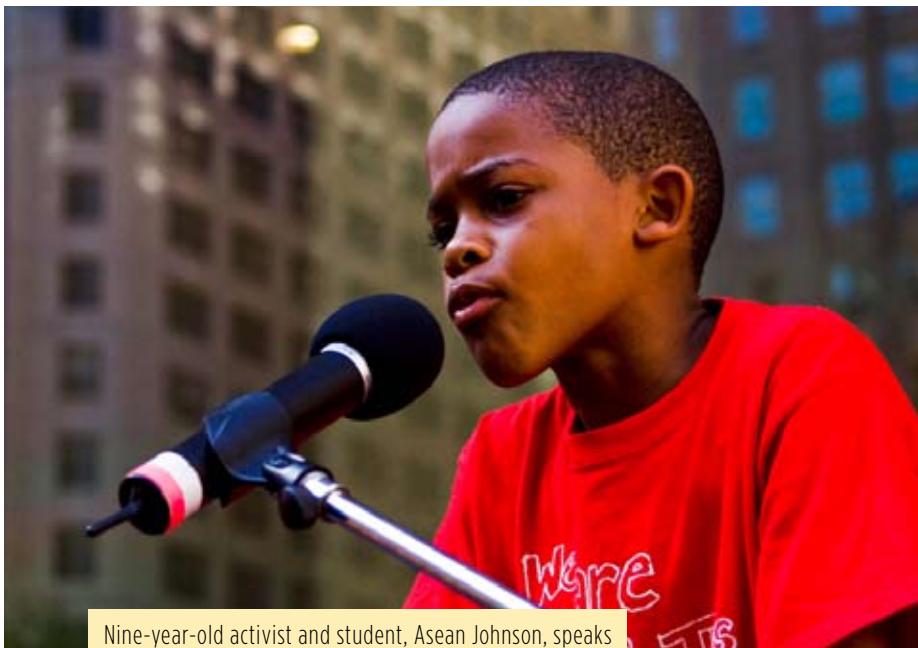


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Whistle-  
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Pages  
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A FREE PAPER FOR FREE KIDS

ISSUE #41 • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2013



Nine-year-old activist and student, Asean Johnson, speaks at a Chicago Teachers Union rally against school closures.

## SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

Kids and Communities Fight School Closures in Chicago

By HASSAN DOOSTDAR, age 10



CHARLES MILLER

Earlier this year, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) system voted to close 49 elementary schools in the city this fall and one school next year. CPS claims these schools have been "underutilized" and are a drain on its resources. The majority of the schools are in low-income Black neighborhoods. The closings, supporters say, will help reduce CPS's billion dollar deficit,\* but they may also come at a great cost.

Opponents argue that the closings will affect many kids negatively. When a school is closed, kids are assigned to a different existing one; some kids may no longer have a school in their neighborhood, and would be forced to travel further or even move to go to school. Parents are concerned that most of the schools that kids are moving to will be overcrowded.

Nine-year-old Asean Johnson lives in Chicago's South Side and attends Marcus Garvey Math and Science School, one of the 54 schools that CPS had originally scheduled to close. Asean, along with other students, parents, teachers and community members, fought hard to save his school from closing. "I feel that the school closings in Chicago are bad decisions and dangerous," Asean says.

Gang-related violence is a major issue in Chicago, especially in the South and West sides of the city. Some students may be forced to travel from one gang's territory to another's to get to their new schools. "CPS knows the danger in the communities and are sending children across gang lines knowing what will happen to them,"

says Asean. "If I passed into another gang territory I will be frightened to go to school every day. Because there are a lot of possibilities when you cross a gang line, you can get shot, kidnapped or even beat up on your way to school."

As the school system announced the closing of 50 schools in the city, CPS said it would open 16 new charter schools. Asean, who has been a leader in the fight against the closings argues, "That is not equal funding. I feel the school closings are racist because only Black and Latino schools are closing and we have less resources. I believe that every kid should have a good education whether it's in a white neighborhood or Black neighborhood; ...in a public school or charter school every child should have the opportunity to have great education."

More than 500 teachers and 300 staff members have lost their jobs because of the closings and in mid-July CPS laid off more than 2,100 additional teachers. Critics say the school closings and layoffs by themselves still won't be enough to close the deficit. At a protest on June 18, parents and teachers told Fox 32 news that school principals might have to choose between laying off even more teachers or having a shortage of supplies like toilet paper.

Chicago is not the only city making these changes. Philadelphia, Detroit, Newark and Washington have also decided to close schools. All of them had deficits close to 500 million dollars. Many people have been protesting the closings, particularly in Chicago and Philadelphia.



OCCUPY CPS  
Students hold a sit-in to protest the proposed closure of Williams Elementary and Middle Schools in Chicago, Illinois on May 3, 2013.



BILL HEALY  
Chicago students protest the mass school closures sweeping the city.

\*Deficit: Shortage of money or supplies.



**Meet...  
Olga**  
from Burkina Faso

**Name:** Olga Delwende Kabore

**Age:** 15

**Languages Spoken:** Mòoré, French, English (a bit)

**Parents' Jobs:** Papa is a farmer and Mama takes care of me and our home.

**Favorite Foods:** Benga (bean pancakes), Tô (a type of stew) and Attié (similar to couscous, but made from fermented cassava)

**Favorite Animal:** Parrot

**Favorite Subject in School:** English

**Favorite Activity:** Sweeping

**Favorite Flower:** Rose

**What She Wants to Be When She Grows Up:** A doctor



NICOLAS RAYMOND

**Burkina Faso at a Glance**

**Capital of Burkina Faso:** Ouagadougou

**Population:** 16.97 million

**Languages Spoken:** French is the official language, but as Burkina Faso is made up of many different ethnic groups, there are various recognized regional languages, including Mòoré, Mandinka and Bambara.

**Religion:** 60% Muslim (mostly Sunni), 23% Christian (mostly Catholic), 15% traditional indigenous beliefs, 0.6% other, 0.4% nonreligious

**Geography:** A landlocked country (it is completely surrounded by land) in West Africa. It is bordered by Mali and Niger to the North, and Benin, Togo, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to the South.

**Climate:** Mostly tropical climate with two distinct seasons: very rainy and very dry

**86**

Of the 166 detainees at Guantánamo Bay, 86 (52 percent) have been cleared for release by the U.S. government, yet are still being held with no set release date.

# nation&world

## Hunger Strikes at Guantánamo Bay

### Prisoners Continue to Strike in Protest of Indefinite Detentions

By ELIYA AHMAD, age 12



In the Guantánamo Bay detention camp in Cuba, detainees are going on hunger strikes to protest their treatment in the facility and the fact that they are being detained without trial. The United States government has responded by force-feeding the strikers to keep them alive. Built in 2002 to hold people the U.S. government suspects of terrorism, Guantánamo Bay Detention Camp currently holds 166 detainees; 86 have been cleared for release by the government, yet are still being held with no set release date.

Since 2005, the detainees have organized numerous hunger strikes to protest detention center conditions and the failure of the U.S. government to free cleared prisoners. A hunger strike is when someone

stops consuming food and is a form of peaceful resistance because it does not use violence. Unlike previous hunger strikes at Guantánamo Bay that were smaller in scale, at the peak of the current hunger strike, 108 of 166 detainees were participating, protesting long detentions without trial. As of August 2013, a total of 60 prisoners were still on hunger strike. Detainees have used hunger strikes to bring attention to conditions within the facility and, for some, over a decade of detention without legal proceedings.

Some argue that force-feeding—sticking feeding tubes up strikers' noses and into their stomachs, giving them a nutritional supplement—is illegal. In an interview with *IndyKids*, attorney Michael Ratner, President Emeritus of the Center

STEVE RHOADES

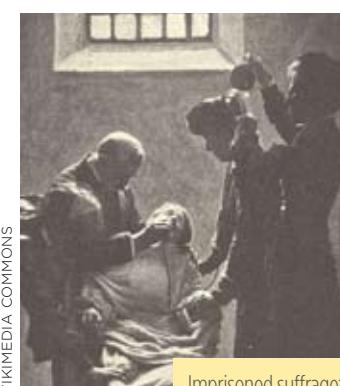


Counting the days that Guantánamo detainees have been on hunger strike.

for Constitutional Rights, stated that many lawyers believe force-feeding to be illegal. "Forgoing food is a personal choice that is protected by international law as well as the U.S. Constitution." Ratner continued on, explaining that the way the force-feeding is being carried out is inhumane and prohibited by treaties signed by the United States.

"I don't want these individuals to die," President Obama told reporters regarding the strike. However, Ratner argues that "the detainees are being force-fed not because the government cares about their lives, but because a death might force the government to close Guantánamo. A death would certainly give the United States even a worse reputation than it already has on the Guantánamo issue."

## HUNGER STRIKES THROUGHOUT HISTORY



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

**1909:** Marion Wallace Dunlop, an imprisoned suffragette in Great Britain, carried out a hunger strike when she was not recognized as a political prisoner during the struggle to win the right to vote for women. Many of the women who later followed her example were force-fed during their resistance.

Imprisoned suffragettes in both the United States and Britain were often force-fed during their hunger strikes.

**1981:** In Northern Ireland, a group of prisoners arrested during the Troubles went on hunger strike to demand recognition as political prisoners over the conflict between Irish Republicans and Ulster Unionists. Ten of the hunger strikers died, of whom the first was Irish Republican Army volunteer and strike leader, Bobby Sands.

**2013:** Inmates at Pelican Bay State Prison in Northern California have been on hunger strike since July 8, 2013 to protest prison conditions and to call for an end to indefinite solitary confinement.



SALINA CANIAZES

**1943:** Mahatma Gandhi went on a hunger strike in India during his imprisonment by the British colonial government for his anticolonial activism. His numerous hunger strikes and other forms of nonviolent resistance served to inspire countless future civil rights activists.

## indykids!

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### WHAT IS INDYKIDS?

*IndyKids* is a free newspaper, website and teaching tool that aims to inform children on current news and world events from a progressive perspective and to inspire in children a passion for social justice and learning. *IndyKids* is funded through donations and grants.

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### HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Just contact *IndyKids*: Adults and kids can write articles, take photos, contribute artwork and help distribute the paper.

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IndyKids, P.O. Box 2281, New York, NY 10163.  
or donate online at [www.indykids.org](http://www.indykids.org)



# Where in the World?

All the places listed below are mentioned in this issue. Can you match them with their general location on the world map at right? Answers are at the bottom of this page.

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Chicago _____                   | f) France _____       |
| b) Burkina Faso _____              | g) Brooklyn _____     |
| c) Cuba (Guantánamo Bay) _____     | h) South Africa _____ |
| d) Bangladesh _____                |                       |
| e) Yellowstone National Park _____ |                       |



## George Zimmerman Acquitted for Trayvon Martin Killing

Written by YUUKI REAL, age 13  
Edited by THEO FRYE-YANOS, age 10



**O**n July 13, 2013, George Zimmerman was acquitted of killing Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old African American. The killing happened on February 26, 2012, in Sanford, Florida. The jury of six women, five of whom were white, found George Zimmerman not guilty after concluding that there wasn't enough evidence to prove that he killed Trayvon with malicious or racist intentions.

Zimmerman's acquittal led thousands of people across the nation to protest, believing that the verdict demonstrated the persistent unfair treatment toward African Americans in this country. Commentators believed that if Trayvon Martin had been white and Zimmerman Black, the jury would have sent Zimmerman to jail. They also felt that Zimmerman, a 28-year-old Peruvian-American man, was frustrated by recent break-ins in his neighborhood and jumped to conclusions upon seeing Trayvon, because he was an unfamiliar Black teenager in a hooded sweatshirt.

Those who believe in Zimmerman's innocence say that he acted in self-defense and that Trayvon attacked him first. Several people who know Zimmerman said that he was not the type of person to kill someone out of malice. However, many people question Florida's controversial "stand your ground" law, which removes a person's



Protests broke out across the country in response to the verdict in the trial over the killing of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman.

obligation to retreat from a physical threat and allows them to use lethal force against that threat if they feel that their life is in danger. While Zimmerman's lawyer did not use this law in his defense, the jury received an explanation of the law and how it applied to the case.

In the end, the trial raises important questions about ongoing issues around race in our country. President Barack Obama, in his speech after the verdict was announced, said, "I think it's important to recognize that the African American community is looking at this issue through a set of experiences and a history that doesn't go away."

## Struggle for Labor Rights Continues After Massive Factory Collapse in Bangladesh

By TANYA PORCARI, age 10



**T**he Savar building collapse on April 24, 2013 was the deadliest disaster in the garment industry's history. Rana Plaza near Dhaka, Bangladesh was an eight-story building where nearly 3,000 adults and children worked to earn a living. Of the thousands buried among the rubble when the building collapsed, 1,130 people were killed and 2,500 people were injured.

Employees noticed cracks in the building the day before the collapse, but management forced them to continue working. The upper floors could not handle the weight and the vibrations of the machinery. Attempts to warn management were ignored. In other words, the "accident" was entirely preventable. As a result, the building's owner, Mohammed Sohel Rana, may face charges of "culpable homicide."\*

The *New York Times* reported that pressure from consumer and labor groups to ensure worker safety has Wal-Mart, Gap and other retailers scrambling to forge new safety standards in Bangladesh's apparel industry. Interestingly, prior to the building collapse, these same retailers were instrumental in defeating a 2011 proposal to increase wages and safety standards.



Photos of missing family members posted during the days after the collapse.

Unions have long campaigned for such changes. "In the past," said Kalpana Akter of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity, "whenever workers tried to form associations they were subjected to beatings and harassment." In 2012, the "vocal and fearless" Bangladeshi labor activist Aminul Islam was murdered for his advocacy work. While the Savar building collapse has brought the plight of garment workers to a global audience, their fight for decent wages and safe working conditions is far from over.

\*Culpable homicide: responsibility for the worker deaths.

## newsbriefs



KATHRYN SCHLECHTER

### Stop-and-Frisk Declared in Violation of Constitution

By MALIK NICKENS, INDYKIDS STAFF

On August 12, 2013, Federal Judge Shira A. Scheindlin ruled the NYPD's stop-and-frisk policy in violation of the Fourth Amendment against unreasonable searches and seizures and the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. Judge Scheindlin declared that the NYPD "adopted a policy of indirect racial profiling," targeting young Black and Latino men. The ruling does not end the practice, but does demand reforms and increased oversight.



KARA NEWHOUSE

### Pennsylvania Children Issued Fracking Gag Order

By SAMUEL MARTINEZ, age 11

Two Pennsylvania children, ages seven and 10, and their parents were issued a gag order banning them from ever speaking about fracking or shale oil drilling again. In 2011, the Hallowich family received \$750,000 in settlement money from Range Resources Corp, over claims that their drilling site polluted the family's water supply. It might be the first time in U.S. history that a gag order has applied to children. The family sought the settlement to finance moving away from the site.



MTUME\_SOUL

### "We Can't Survive on \$7.25"

By JULIANA BERROA, age 11

In August, fast-food workers throughout the country went on strike again for a living wage and the right to unionize. The current minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour cannot support a family at today's cost of living, leading workers to demand a raise to \$15. Fast-food employees are more likely to rely on government assistance because they cannot make ends meet on minimum wage alone. Workers also want to unionize to protect themselves from being overworked and underpaid.

# THE AGE OF THE WHISTLEBLOWER

## Edward Snowden: Hero or Criminal?

By THEO FRYE YANOS, age 10



On June 12, 2013, Edward Snowden, a United States citizen and contractor who worked for a private company hired by the National Security Administration (NSA), leaked to the press that the NSA was conducting a mass surveillance of phone and email records through Verizon, Apple, Facebook, Google and Microsoft.

Snowden knew about the surveillance because of his job, but it was classified, top-secret information, meaning he was not allowed to disclose it to the public. Nevertheless, Snowden leaked the information because he thought that the public had a right to know when they are being tracked or surveilled. Consequently, federal prosecutors formally charged Snowden with unauthorized communication of national defense information, willful communication of classified intelligence to an unauthorized person and theft of government property. He has left the country to seek asylum in Russia and a debate has begun in the United States, leading to a big controversy about whether what he did was heroic or criminal.

The NSA started the mass surveillance because it wanted to monitor terrorists and their communications. Still, many Americans think that they have gone too far in invading people's privacy without their knowledge. They claim that

Edward Snowden acted as a whistleblower and that the NSA violated the Fourth Amendment by collecting phone records from phone companies with top-secret court decisions. "It's one thing to say that we want the government to have these capabilities. It's another thing to allow this to be assembled without any public knowledge, without any public debate and with no real accountability," said Glenn Greenwald, a journalist for the *Guardian*, the newspaper to which Snowden first supplied the classified information.

However, others believe that Snowden's actions damaged U.S. intelligence efforts and security, and that with public knowledge of tracking, terrorists can find other ways to communicate. "What Snowden has revealed has caused irreversible and significant damage to our country and our allies," said General Keith Alexander, the head of the NSA.

While many people are arguing about whether Snowden was right or wrong to leak the classified information, this case has created a huge debate about Americans' right to privacy.

Additional research and writing by MOKGWETSI SIZWE CHAPMAN, age 15



## What Do You Know About the Fourth Amendment?

By MOKGWETSI SIZWE CHAPMAN, age 15, and INDYKIDS STAFF

The Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution (created in 1787) was added as part of the Bill of Rights on December 15, 1791. The Fourth Amendment of the Bill of Rights gives U.S. citizens protection against unreasonable search and seizure by police officers and government officials without a warrant (legal permission) from a judge.

**Glossary of terms** **Leak:** to reveal legally classified information, or information that is not allowed to be made public. **National Security Agency (NSA):** the central producer and manager of signals intelligence for the United States. The NSA is primarily responsible for global monitoring, collection, decoding, translation and analysis of information. **Whistleblower:** a person who informs an organization or the public about illegal activity.

## The Case of U.S. Army Private Manning: What Does it Mean for Whistleblowers?

By NANCY RYERSON, INDYKIDS STAFF

In 2010, Private Bradley Manning\* shared more than 700,000 classified documents and videos about the U.S. Army with WikiLeaks, a website that publishes government secrets from whistleblowers. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the German newspaper *Der Spiegel* all published parts of the WikiLeaks documents. Some of these documents and videos involved things Manning saw, heard about and found disturbing, such as a video of civilians (non-soldiers) being killed in Iraq by a U.S. war helicopter. Many of the other documents described day-to-day life in the wars in

Afghanistan and Iraq, which Manning thought showed problems with the way the wars were being run.

Manning was accused of "aiding the enemy." The government said that the documents could potentially be seen by the United States' enemies in the Middle East because they were on the internet. The punishment for aiding the enemy is life in prison. On July 31, 2013, a court decided that Manning was not guilty of aiding the enemy, but is guilty of 22 other crimes such as espionage.

Free-speech advocates worry that Manning's punishment will discourage investigative journalists who are covering the army and the U.S. government from publishing stories that criticize the government. As for what the case means for Edward Snowden, some supporters worry that Snowden will be accused of the same espionage crimes as Manning. Others think the case is a good sign for Snowden.

"I think the Snowden disclosures raise much bigger questions about the role of leakers in our society," said Mary-Rose Papandrea, a professor of law at Boston College, to NPR News. "His disclosures have had a big impact on the public debate. They are meaningful; they are important." She said the Manning documents, on the other hand, "did not have significant impact on public discourse."

Since the sentence was handed down, supporters of Manning have announced that they plan to work with Amnesty International to organize a petition requesting a pardon from President Obama.

**\*Editor's Note:** On August 21, 2013, Manning was sentenced to 35 years in prison at Fort Leavenworth outside of Kansas City, KS. In a statement released the following day, Manning made an announcement to the public that she identifies as female and requested that the public and media refer to her using female pronouns and the name Chelsea E. Manning.

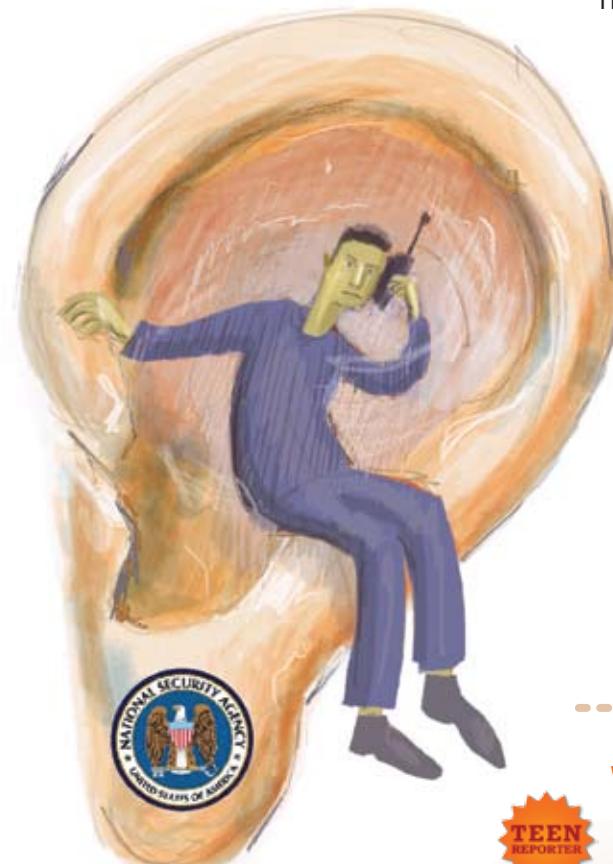
### Interesting Dates in the Life of the Fourth Amendment:

**1791:** The Fourth Amendment was introduced by James Madison, the fourth president of the United States. In the days before independence, the British government carried out general search warrants against the colonists. Madison wanted to prevent this from happening under the new American government.

**1914:** The Supreme Court case, *Weeks v. United States*, resulted in the creation of the exclusionary rule, meaning that evidence acquired illegally (without a warrant) cannot be used in a criminal trial.

**1967:** The ruling for the Supreme Court case, *Katz v. United States*, concluded that evidence acquired by electronically recording or listening to conversations without a warrant cannot be used in a criminal trial.

**2001:** Several weeks after the September 11 terrorist attacks, Congress passed the USA PATRIOT Act, which expanded small exceptions to the Fourth Amendment to increase the government's power to collect the private information of its citizens.





## Powerful Tornado Causes Major Destruction in Oklahoma

By ALEJANDRA PAULINO, age 11



On the afternoon of May 20, 2013, a tornado struck Moore, Oklahoma. The tornado killed 24 people, including nine children. According to the Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, about 2,400 homes were damaged in Moore and Oklahoma City, and some 10,000 people were directly impacted by the tornado. The cost of the disaster will be higher than that of the May 3, 1999 tornado that hit the same area.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## Nature's Balancing Act in Yellowstone

By ELEANOR HEDGES-DUROY, age 10



According to a study published in the *Journal of Animal Ecology*, the population of elk in northern Yellowstone National Park has decreased since gray wolves were reintroduced. This caused grizzly bear populations to increase because elk and bears eat the same berries. The study shows that lives in ecosystems are connected and how one change affects the entire system.

## Amazing Garden in a Bottle



ANNE-LENE HEINRICH

By YUUKI REAL, age 13



David Latimer, a retired person in England, has a "Garden in a Bottle," that has thrived for over 53 years and was only watered once in 1972 since he first planted it in 1960. Plants can recycle resources, like water and fallen leaves, within the bottle to stay alive. This could be useful in space stations, as plants clean stale and polluted air, and bottled plants don't take up much room.

53

David Latimer's "Garden in a Bottle" has thrived for 53 years, during which it was only watered two times.

# culture&activism

## Brazilians Take to the Streets to Protest Government Spending

By SAMUEL MARTINEZ, age 11

**S**ince June 11, people across Brazil have been staging protests against the government. Brazil will host the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympics in 2016, and both events will cost the government an estimated \$31 billion dollars. According to the *New York Times*, \$3 billion dollars have already been spent on the construction of stadiums alone. Protesters argue that this is unnecessary spending that could be used to fund better hospitals, schools and other public programs in the country. They are also protesting high taxes and increased political corruption. Most recently, demonstrators have cried out against the costs associated with Pope Francis' recent visit to Brazil. *AP* estimated that the trip cost Brazil between \$145 and \$159 million.

The wave of protests was originally sparked by a nine cent increase in bus fares in parts of the country which brought the bus fare up to \$1.47 in São Paulo. This means that a Brazilian making minimum wage might spend up to 26 percent of their income on bus fare.

Brazilian political analyst Alexandre Barros notes, "The economy isn't growing and prices are rising. People can no longer consume as much as they want, creating anger and fear in the middle class."



SEMIILLA LUZ

The protests in Brazil were initially sparked by a nine cent increase in bus fares.

In the first two weeks of demonstrations, six protesters were killed. Additionally, protesters have blocked off the Port of Santos, Latin America's largest port, and have set up roadblocks and barricades throughout the country. Although bus fares were brought back down following the demonstrations, protesters continue to speak out against larger problems like corruption and police violence in their country.

## The Daily Life of a French Girl

By ELEANOR HEDGES-DUROY, age 10



**N**ine-year-old Fanny Pierrat lives in a mountain village in southern France with her parents, grandparents and brother. School lasts from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., but, "on Wednesdays there isn't any school." Fanny studies history/geography, French, science, math, art, sports and English. She eats lunch at school, where the "cantine" serves three-course meals. "At recess we draw and play charades, we don't have a playground." Fanny also enjoys dance classes and riding horses. Fanny's school has four two-week breaks and six weeks of summer vacation. Fanny says, "In summer I go away to the mountains or the sea. I also go to day camp. In winter I go skiing." Fanny likes her village because it is safe and kids have some independence. How is your life different from Fanny's?

## La Vie Quotidienne d'une Jeune Fille Française

**F**anny Pierrat a neuf ans et vit avec ses parents, ses grands-parents et son frère dans un village de montagne dans le sud de la France. L'école dure de 8h30 jusqu'à 16h30, mais "le mercredi il n'y a pas d'école." Fanny étudie l'histoire-géographie, le français, les maths, les arts plastiques, le sport et l'anglais. Elle déjeune à la cantine de l'école tous les midis. "A la récréation on dessine et on fait des mimes, il n'y a pas d'aire de jeux." Fanny aime aussi prendre des cours de danse et de poney. L'école de



CEDRIC PIERRAT

Fanny Pierrat.

Fanny a quatre périodes de vacances scolaires de deux semaines chacune pendant l'année et six semaines de vacances l'été. Fanny nous dit: "l'été je vais à la mer ou à la montagne. Je vais aussi au centre aéré. L'hiver je fais du ski." Fanny aime son village parce qu'elle s'y sent en sécurité et que les enfants peuvent y avoir une certaine autonomie. Est-ce que votre vie ressemble à celle de Fanny?

## School Closures



By ANA PHELAN, age 9

Throughout the United States, public schools are being shut down in various cities, officials say, to save money. Kid Reporter Ana Phelan asked her classmates at PS 146, the Brooklyn New School, the following question about school closures: If you were a student at one of the schools being shut down, what would you do?



I would protest... and also write to the mayor and tell him it's not fair to close schools due to test scores. If you have to shut down a school, it should be because the school is dirty, kids are getting sick or the kids are being mistreated, not because of small classes or test scores. I am a kid, not a test score!

**Kya Parris, age 9**



I would write a letter to the school asking them to change their minds, because of how

much the school meant to me and leaving it would be really sad... When they shut down schools they are breaking friendships of innocent kids, because school is what starts your friendship, not what ends it. To people who are reading, I hope you understand how many hearts are being broken because of this and I hope you try to make a change.

**Ava Galindez, age 9**



I would write a letter to the Department of Education in NYC. If there are fewer

students in these schools maybe that's a good thing because you could make smaller classes, which are better for learning, and that could mean great leaders for NYC. The schools are producing low test scores because they need more support so that kids can get a better education.

**A.R., age 9**



## Someday, you could be a Public School Principal, just like Anna Allanbrook

By NYLU AVERY BERNSHAYN, age 8



**A**nna Allanbrook is the principal of PS 146, the Brooklyn New School. She spoke with *IndyKids* about educational issues, and the joys and challenges of being the principal at a New York City public school.

**Nylu: How long have you been the principal at PS 146, Brooklyn New School (BNS)?**

**Anna Allanbrook:** I have been a principal at PS 146 since 1997—16 years.

**What is the most challenging part about being a principal at a public school and what is the most important issue in public education that you are concerned about?**

I think the most challenging thing for me is that I have a lot of ideas about what I want

for the students, and sometimes I do not have enough money. It is difficult to make sure we have everything we need as a school and enough money to do it with! I think everyone wants to make sure that children are learning, but right now our government doesn't know how to assess [this], so they give lots of tests. And I think that instead of putting money into tests, what we really should be doing is helping our youngest children before they even come to school. I think if we did a better job with that, we wouldn't have all of these problems in elementary schools.

**As a principal at your school, what are you doing to address standardized testing?**

I think in other public schools you will find children coming home and saying that they did test prep all day long. Our students come home saying they went on a trip to the Museum of Natural History and to the Chinese Scholar's

Garden. They come home saying they learned how to do calligraphy and learned about the Great Wall. And I think that's how I am dealing with it—by making sure our students do the really good work, and giving a little practice right before the test so they feel confident enough to take the test.

**How can kids learn more about issues in education?**

We, as adults, have to make sure that kids are part of the conversation about issues in education. We have to make sure there is a dialogue about current issues in education that gets the kids involved!

**What is your favorite thing about being the principal at BNS?**

Well, I am very proud of the school. This year a second grader wrote a song with her teacher about their island study, and performed it with her class in front of the entire school! It is special, creative moments like this that are my favorite part of being the principal at BNS.

## The Edible Schoolyard: Where Students Grow Their Own Food

By KYLIE FREYMAN, age 10



**A**n edible garden growing at a school? Why yes, there's one in Brooklyn! At PS 216, the Arturo Toscanini Primary School, students and teachers have the opportunity to work in their schoolyard garden. Kids at PS 216 learn about healthy diets and see how food grows, just like kids who grow up on farms.

Pioneered by Alice Waters, a famous chef and proponent of the organic food movement, the Edible Schoolyard program began at Martin Luther King Middle School in Berkeley, California. One of the PS 216 directors, John Lyons, brought this program to New York. Funded by local council members, private donors and foundations, the garden at PS 216 was started in October 2010 in the old school parking lot. The garden now grows flowers, potatoes, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, garlic, cherries, carrots and lettuce...the list goes on! "Pretty much anything you can grow in the city of New York, you will find here," says Ms. Cat, one of the garden's teachers.

Students not only grow the food in the garden, but they also get to eat it! The fresh ingredients from the garden go into the student kitchen, where the students learn to prepare healthy snacks. Children also learn fun facts. For example, that dark leafy greens get sweeter as the weather outside gets colder.

Many people in the neighborhood help keep the garden growing, and you too can help! To become a volunteer, just contact the garden manager, Mirem Villamil, at [mv@esync.org](mailto:mv@esync.org).



The school garden at P.S. 216 in Brooklyn.

KYLIE FREYMAN



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

## ORIGINAL CARTOON BY CRISTINA BERROA

By CRISTINA  
BERROA,  
age 9



NELSON MANDELA  
WHO AM I? ANSWER



## WHO AM I?



By RYEN OLIVIA BABBS, age 8

1. I was born on July 18, 1918.
2. I helped form the African National Congress Youth League in 1944.
3. I was put in prison for 27 years for fighting the apartheid regime, a system of racial segregation imposed by law.
4. In February of 1990, when I was 71 years old, I was released from prison.
5. At 75 years old, I was the first South African Black man to be elected president.
6. I won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

## GETTING WILD WITH THE CROCODILE



By KALANI CHEN-HAYES, age 10

Crocodiles are reptiles that live near swamps and marshes in the tropical and subtropical regions of the world. One type of crocodile is the Nile crocodile, an African crocodile. The scientific name of the Nile crocodile is *Crocodylus niloticus*.

- Crocodiles have about two tons of force in their jaws. At any given time, a croc has 64 extremely sharp, hollow teeth and grows between three to four thousand teeth in a lifetime. When the jaws of a croc close they lock together, which prevents prey from escaping.
- A crocodile has about 150 small bones on its back that act as armor. In fact, ancient Romans used to wear the skin from the backs of crocodiles to protect them in battle. The bones on the back also function as solar panels to absorb sunlight and keep the croc's cold-blooded body warm.



ANDREW GOULD

- The tail of a crocodile is strong and flexible, and it stores enough protein to allow a larger croc to survive up to a year without food.
- Crocs have hunted in African rivers since the age of the dinosaurs. They evolved over 200 million years ago!
- When crocs lay their eggs, the colder eggs in the nest will become females and the warmer ones will become male. Some animals like to eat croc eggs or even croc hatchlings, so crocs must keep watch over their young to protect them from predators. When it is time for them to hatch, parents can pick the eggs up in their mouth, roll them around and gently use their teeth to carefully crack open the eggs.

N E T N Q W Z W N U T E A J D B O I R R  
J A E O S U N N E X R R C J Y J Y H E E  
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W Y I U B N F G W G U A N T A N A M O L  
J X S Y Q D A B J X T A A L C D I H L J  
C H Y T N E M D N E M A H T R U O F B G  
H H M X H T E O O C G M Y E O Z T T E E  
C H I C A G O P U B L I C S C H O O L S  
M V L A T T I U Q C A O P R O T E S T E  
J Y R D B G D R H V S R M U D X Y M S B  
T O H S L E A K R Y N R L Y I D O U I I  
X P S T O N X R S O N E U U L D Y F H Q  
E D W F A A A T D L B L R P E M N C W P  
Z Y P C N I E N G E G A W M U M I N I M  
O C A P F M H H R S N Y L K O O R B U W

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